

MFRC Guideline Implementation Monitoring Committee
Meeting Minutes
July 19, 2001

In attendance: Dave Parent, Greg Damlo, Bob Oswold, Shawn Perich, Roger Scherer, Mike Phillips

Absent: Rich Holm

Guests: Amie Brown, Stephanie Kessler

Dave Parent convened the meeting at 10:15 a.m. The following handouts were provided:

1. Agenda
2. Proposed committee and work group makeup
3. Layout of proposed Minnesota Forest Resources Council (MFRC) guideline revision process
4. Proposed amended language to implementation goals report in the section on measures of guideline application
5. Issues for consideration in guideline revision discussion
6. Guideline Implementation Monitoring Committee (GIMC) proposed charter dated March 1999

GIMC charter

GIMC reviewed its proposed MFRC charter to ascertain if the charge of the GIMC includes providing oversight to the guideline revision process. Amie Brown led the discussion on the specific charges to the GIMC that are contained within the charter. Amie offered the opinion that, in the broadest sense, the responsibility for providing oversight to the guideline review process is contained in the charge to the GIMC. Mike Phillips suggested that clarifying language is needed to specifically charge the GIMC with that responsibility. He indicated that an MFRC committee would be helpful to filter and organize the responses received on guideline revisions. The question is whether the GIMC or an expanded GIMC could serve as that committee. The GIMC members agreed that GIMC, possibly reconstituted and expanded, could serve as the sounding board and organizing committee for the guideline review process. This recommendation will be forwarded on to the MFRC for discussion.

Amie pointed out that, in her view, the committees charge would be to sort out and organize all of the responses, but not to filter out the responses (important distinction). Dave Parent expressed the view that the makeup of the GIMC was selected because its members were more operationally directed to the guidelines as written. He indicated that this might not be the committee to necessarily assist and revise new guidelines. Bob Oswold suggested that the charge would be to review the guidelines, not necessarily to revise or rewrite the guidelines. Amie stated that the charge to the MFRC is to review the guidelines and suggested that, in the end, the

Council could decide on few changes to the recommendations. Greg Damlo asked if it would be up to the MFRC to approve all changes to the guidelines. The GIMC members agreed that the entire MFRC will make the final decisions on the revisions to the guidelines.

Organizational chart for guideline revision process

Amie reviewed a proposed organization with time lines for the guideline review process. The first phase will involve the collection of background information from a variety of individuals, work groups, and committees (i.e., public input, science team, practitioner groups, format/layout group, guideline implementation monitoring technical committee). Information will be collected from these through the fall of 2001 with a report of the recommendations approved by an MFRC Review Committee and forwarded to the MFRC in March 2002. When the MFRC decides which changes are to go forward for incorporation into the guidelines, these changes will be forwarded to a Technical Experts Committee(TEC).

There was considerable discussion as to the makeup and function of the TEC. Dave Parent wondered if there would be a silviculturist and economist as part of the TEC and thought it to be particularly important to include the silviculturist expertise on both the science team and the TEC. Mike Phillips pointed out that the function of the TEC was different than that of the science team from the information gathering phase. The science team will provide: 1) evaluations of the adequacy of the guidelines, and 2) suggestions on what changes are needed to ensure that the guidelines are consistent with the most current scientific knowledge. The function of the TEC is to incorporate the modifications approved by the MFRC into the guidelines. Once incorporated, the changes will be reviewed and approved by the MFRC Review Committee and then forwarded to the MFRC for approval.

If any of the proposed changes are new, Amie pointed out that these changes must be peer reviewed and be subject to an economic analysis. Reports from these two reviews will be sent to the MFRC Review Committee and then to the full MFRC.

Dave wondered where the private landowners would be involved in the process. Mike then reviewed a draft proposal for the makeup of the information gathering groups. He suggested that NIPF representation could be obtained in public comments, would likely be one of the principal facilitated practitioners groups, and could also be directly involved in the format/layout work group.

There was a spirited discussion on the breadth of economic review needed and where in the process it should occur. Amie indicated that Charlie Blinn and Mike Kilgore would be putting together a proposed study that would provide the MFRC with some empirical data on the costs of implementing existing guidelines and the marginal effects on costs of the proposed changes. The GIMC supported the need for such a study. Amie suggested that the economic study is needed in order for the MFRC to finalize its review of the guidelines. Shawn Perich suggested that we look to other states for information on the economic effects of applying guidelines.

The GIMC members discussed the utility of undertaking a practitioner review in addition to a statutorily mandated scientific peer review. The GIMC members support a recommendation that a practitioner review of the proposed guideline changes be discussed by the MFRC.

Amie summarized what had been discussed relating to the guideline review process.

1. MFRC members will be asked to provide to Amie at a date certain, recommendations of individuals to serve on the science team. Dave suggested that a sorting process be used by Amie to develop a recommended list from the names submitted for MFRC approval.
2. The GIMC should serve as the core of the MFRC Review Committee with additions appointed by the MFRC to expand stakeholder representation.
3. The TEC should be made up of the GIMTC as the core group with additional members appointed by the MFRC based on the type guideline changes approved and forwarded to the TEC. Also, some members of the GIMTC might be excluded if there are no suggested changes in their areas of expertise. The GIMC members also suggested that the TEC should have members who: 1) provide an economics perspective, 2) provide a consideration of the potential impact on loggers, and 3) will look beyond the timber harvesting perspective and consider the needs of other users of the forest (e.g., ease of walking around a timber harvest versus the desire to provide adequate amounts of coarse woody debris).
4. The process of approval of the revisions will be complete by the end of June 2003, and that formatting, publication, and distribution would be deferred to FY 04.

The adequacy of the proposed budget for the guideline review process was also discussed. Mike Phillips suggested that the \$12,000 for FY 02 might not be adequate to cover all costs associated with the first year of the process. Dave Parent requested that Mike put together a realistic budget that Dave could discuss at the July 24 MFRC meeting.

Implementation goals revision

Mike Phillips presented revised language to be added to the implementation goals report as requested by the MFRC. The addition identified the guideline area most in need of improvement in use and application contained in the goals report section "Measures of Guideline Application". The GIMC approved the language submitted and requested that it be reviewed and approved by the MFRC at an appropriate meeting.

Status of 2001 monitoring

Mike reviewed the status of the second round of implementation monitoring. As of June 30, 60 completed monitoring sites had been submitted for payment and the quality control field reviews for those sites were completed. Mike also indicated that the contractor had indicated that monitoring on approximately 80% of the sites (96) had been completed although he was waiting for those additional sites to be submitted. He also stated that managing the guideline revision process necessitated that his role in the implementation monitoring program be modified. Mike

indicated that much of the responsibilities for operating the implementation monitoring program would be given to Rick Dahlman and Dick Rossman with Mike's role to retain the general oversight of the program.

Demonstration Forest monitoring

The GIMC discussed the feasibility of the MFRC monitoring efforts to be linked to the proposed monitoring in the Demonstration Forest. Concern was expressed that monitoring in the Demonstration Forest not reinvent the wheel and that the existing monitoring processes be used where appropriate in the Demonstration Forest initiative. Mike Phillips indicated that he planned to meet with Clarence Turner to identify those linkages between these efforts. Clarence Turner is a new Division of Forestry employee who will coordinate much of the DNR's involvement in the Demonstration Forest.

Forest Summit views

The Demonstration Forest discussion served as a segue into a discussion of the views of the GIMC members on the Forest Summit. Dave Parent suggested that the MFRC role was strategic rather than tactical and could offer broad guidance on a number of issues. These would include guideline application, cooperation with private landowners, information processes used by the MFRC, effectiveness monitoring and support for locating the effectiveness monitoring research in the Demonstration Forest. Additional opinions were expressed by other members of the GIMC and there was a general concern about future funding for the Demonstration Forest efforts.

Dave Parent adjourned the meeting at 2:15 p.m.